



Team Boston!

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Boston MEPS Supporting the US Marine Corps Toys for Tots Program

The Holiday Season often brings out the best in everyone and we certainly enjoy and relish in the season. Children are our prized possession and we always want to see them happy. One way of accomplishing this is our continual support for the Toys for Tots Program. The US Marine Corps has adopted, maintained, and has increased the number of participants and agencies over the past years to make sure we keep our benevolent spirits alive while keeping smiling faces on a great number of needy children.



This program was started in 1947 by Major Bill Hendricks, US Marine Corps Reserve and his wife. She had made a Raggedy Ann doll to be delivered to an organization that would pass it on to a needy child at Christmas. They both realized that an organization did not exist to deliver toys to less fortunate children and so "Toys for Tots" was born. That same year Major Hendricks and a group of Marine Reservists in Los Angeles collected and distributed over 5,000 toys to the children who needed a toy.

The initial program was a success and in 1948 the US Marine Corps adopted the program and named it "Toys for Tots". Major Hendricks, when not performing his military Reservist time, was the Director of Public Relations for Warner Brothers

Studio. With his influence, he was able to persuade a large number of celebrities to support this vital program. The Toys for Tots Logo and the first poster were designed by Walt Disney Studios. In 1992, First Lady Barbara Bush served as the national spokesperson and in her autobiography named the program as one of her favorite charities.

Each year the program is embraced by a majority of individuals and agencies. Everyone looks for the boxes and is ready and willing to donate a toy. Within the Barnes Building, people would ask, "Where are the "Toys for Tots" boxes located and others would reply, "in the hallway of the

4th Floor – The Boston MEPS".

Mrs. Maryann Harty was the point of contact for our Toys for Tots program at the Boston MEPS. She was very engaged and had everyone buzzing around smiling as the boxes filled up with new and unwrapped toys. The boxes contained oversized stuffed animals, Barbie dolls, trucks, cars, puzzle sets and many more toys. As the boxes grew fuller and fuller we knew the time was approaching for them to leave our floor. This is a very significant event because no matter what age group we fell into, by looking at the toys we automatically broke out in a smile. Therefore, we can only imagine the bright surprise on every young recipient's face!!!!!!

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Commander's Corner



LCDR Susanne McNinch

As the Mother of two young children I know how difficult it is to raise well-rounded children. How children learn to save and spend money can play an enormous part in their future success. With patience and persistence, even the busiest parents can ensure their kids will become financially savvy adults. Here are five guidelines to get started:

1. Educate on the Fly: If you wait for the perfect time to have a sit-down talk about money, the day will never come. Instead, take advantage of real-life opportunities to teach. As early as age four or five, children will watch curiously as their parents make financial transactions. When your kids notice you pay and take change from a cashier, take a minute to explain the purchase process. When they see an ATM dispensing cash, let them know that the money comes from your bank account and you can only withdraw the money you have earned. When they insist on owning everything that they see, discuss the difference between “wants” and “needs”. Their begging may test your resolve, but standing firm will reinforce the message that controlled spending is important.
2. Encourage Goal Setting: Just like adults, children need a reason to save money instead of spending it. Savings goals for young children should be short-term and small enough to allow them to see results quickly. Saving change for a few weeks to buy a new action figure is a process they will grasp.

3. Develop a System: As early as the pre-teen years, introducing systems that mimic adult life can help prepare children for the real world. A weekly allowance is good but make sure that it is small enough to require kids to make choices about spending. There should also be an expectation that a portion of the allowance should go towards savings.
4. Move Beyond the Savings: Teach your children about investments. One of the most important concepts that children should learn is the power of compounding. If they put their money in an investment with a positive return and reinvest those earnings as they are received, the money will build upon itself and grow over the long term. Children should also be aware that putting money in an investment vehicle does come with risk and that a positive return is not guaranteed. Many financial companies have investment accounts specifically designed to educate kids.
5. Maintain a United Front: Both parents should agree upon a plan before making rules about money. Family members should be educated too so their temptation to shower your kids with gifts and cash does not counteract with your teachings. The best policy for parents is to lead by example. Your kids will always remember that Mom and Dad took care of their money and that will give them a head start toward achieving their own dreams of financial success.

Boston MEPS Holiday Party

The Boston MEPS held a wonderful holiday party at the Four Winds Restaurant in downtown Boston. MEPS and Liaison employees and their family members enjoyed a delightful

evening of delicious food and warm conversation. It was a great way to socialize and celebrate the Holiday Season.



Lining Up for the grub



Gathered 'Round the Fire



Eat, Drink, and speak merrily!

First Sergeant's Corner: Compulsive Shopping

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We all possess the trait to have a compulsion or an addiction. Some of these can be biting our nails, smacking gum, talking too much and so on. According to Mr. Webster an addiction is “a compulsive need or use of a habit”. Ah! and I thought shopping was a fun thing to do. However, it becomes an addiction if it is done too much. Shopping is a good past-time and we enjoy participating in it. People shop for special gifts, household items; they buy sale items for future use and sometimes also “window shop”. Shopping excessively becomes a problem whenever we consistently go over budget. Some individuals are caught up in the moment of the excitement and then they are unable to handle the consequences of their actions. In America, shopping is embedded in our culture and the attractive advertisements do not make it easier for us to turn a blind eye.

The big question is: at what point does compulsive shopping become a problem? The answer isn't an easy one, however according to the continual research on the subject matter; numerous experts may shed some insight on this topic. Here are several reasons why shopping can be so addictive, what are the warning signs and how to prevent the cycle of spending.

Some of the addictions are having an uncontrollable desire to shop and difficulty controlling spending, feeling good while shopping but feeling guilty afterwards. The above mentioned warning signs are describing reasons why individuals do this in an excessive way.

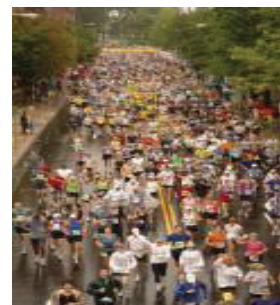
The warning signs can be spending over budget. When someone goes over budget time and time again, this can hurdle them into financial difficulties and they are unable to grasp the fact that they have exceeded their budget limit. These individuals will purchase an over abundance of a specific item instead of purchasing one or two needed items. These items are taken home and get tossed in a closet and never seen or used. Some shopaholics will hide their purchases because they are afraid of being criticized by others. They get the initial “rush” from obtaining the item however when they get it home, remorse sets in and they are afraid of enjoying the purchase.

Once an individual has consciously acknowledged this problem, there are interventions to combat this addiction. These interventions are based on doing something positive such as, attending a “Debtors Anonymous” program, getting credit counseling, and finding other activities to participate in. These activities may include bowling, working on a puzzle, writing, etc.

I hope I have enlightened you a little, and made you aware of the fact that there are individuals who have a shopping addiction, while most of us just enjoy doing it. Our enjoyment can be because we won the “jackpot” or because we stayed within our budget and bought things that we need, although sometimes we do get that item because it has been reduced in price. Shop a little and smile a lot – and enjoy this amazing past-time!



1SG Angela Cameron



The Hartford CT Run



SGT Cabral crosses the Line as SSgt Artis watches

Boston MEPS –Marathon Relay Runners

The 2005 United Technologies Greater Hartford Marathon was held in Hartford, Connecticut on October 8, 2005. The event consisted of a Marathon, Half Marathon, Team Relay and a 5-K Run. Boston MEPS personnel were out in full force, two Relay teams participated. The groups were anxious, very enthusiastic and held their high spirits as they ran side by side in the continuous down pour of rain.

The groups thoroughly enjoyed themselves; some had previous marathon experience while others were newcomers to the event. After the three pairs of team-members completed their relay leg, they headed over to the finished line to cheer in other participants to

include the Boston MEPS last pair of relay runners. Staff Sergeant Artis was very “pumped” as he ran with Sergeant Cabral and Mr. Gregg Thorpe towards the finish line.

They all agreed that their anticipation was enormous before the event started and the adrenalin rush made it an easy run and an unforgettable moment. Team members are listed below.

Team One: LCDR McNinch-US Navy; SFC Fennell-US Army National Guard; SSgt Artis-US Marine Corps; SGT Cabral-US Marine Corps

Team Two: ISG Cameron-US Army; TSgt Lowell-US Air Force; Mr. Gregg Thorpe-Civilian; SPC Mansour-US Army

What a Reason to Celebrate!!

Happy Birthday to our Team Boston members:

Military Mottos

**"This We'll
Defend"
US Army**

**"Honor, Courage,
Commitment"
US Navy**

**"Semper Fidelis"
(Always Faithful)"
US Marines**

**"Uno Ab Alto"
(One over all)
US Air Force**

**"Semper Paratus"
(Always Ready)"
US Coast Guard**

Alexandar McNinch (LCDR McNinch's son)	January 08	Elizabeth O'Rourke (OS2 O'Rourke's Wife)	March 02
Jennifer Harty (Mrs. Harty's daughter)	January 09	Mrs. Florine Goddard	March 09
Marta Fontanez	January 10	Maryann Harty	March 12
Rhonda King (SGT King's wife)	January 18	Cileena Terra (SGT Cabral's daughter)	March 12
Rebecca Boston (Mr. Boston's daughter)	January 18	Jacob Lincoln (HM2 Lincoln's son)	March 16
OS2 Justin O'Rourke	January 31	Dena Harty (Mrs. Harty's daughter in law)	March 18
		Dr. Andrew P. Foley	March 27
Ashley Benitez (Mr. Thorpe's daughter)	February 04		
John Matthews	February 16		
Connor Callum-King (SGT Kings's son)	February 21		
Luke Smerechniak (SSgt Smerechniak's son)	February 27		
Kiera McDonough (SSgt McDonough's daughter)	February 28		
Faith Zitelli (HMC Zitelli's Daughter)	February 28		

Happy Anniversary to our Team Boston families:

The Harty Family March 14



Upcoming Readiness Support Group Events

Hello All!

The Readiness Support Group has a couple of fun ideas on the burner. We will be holding a Valentine's Day Bake Sale on February 14th. We will also be sending home some Valentine's Day goodies to our family members, courtesy of the RSG.

In conjunction with the EO/EEO Offices we will be having a Black History Month Potluck on February 28, 2006. If folks want to make ethnically appropriate food, we have a cookbook in the Applicant's Lounge that you can look at. We will also be holding either a Breakfast cook-off or if the weather permits a Spring Barbeque for March.

We are tentatively working on a Spring Festival style gathering for March.

And beyond that? A picnic and kite flying in May, or even a series of such for April, May, and June.

As always however, we can't do these things without your support! We need you all to give us ideas, or to help out with the Fund Raisers, etc. Remember, The Readiness Support Group is here to support you, and we encourage you to support it.

Kevin A. Robbins, Jr.
RSG Lead

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities (KSA) Identification

Identifying your Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs) is a critical step in clearly communicating your specific qualifications and skills to potential employers and clients. It can also be a powerful source of empowerment and confidence during the inevitable roller coaster of emotions that can accompany a protracted job search.

Personnel should not define their skills in tidy boxes that match career titles. After all, the salary, description and responsibility for a particular position can vary depending on the employer, and the area of the country in which you live. Frequent relocations can also impact opportunity and employment.

How to Develop a Portfolio of Achievement

- Think of a variety of examples for past achievements.
- Develop those examples into the challenge, your action and the result. This is often called a CAR statement.
- Describe each situation.
- When describing an award or recognition, give specifics behind the act.
- Remember that your education is found primarily in informal formats versus formal classroom environments.
- One of the most difficult things to do is supply self-praise for our own accomplishments. Use the following questions as a drill. Complete each response, and share the results with people who will react with positive, yet honest, feedback. Prepare yourself for success by acknowledging your personal KSAs.

A Drill for Your Skills

- What are some qualities or attributes that you admire in other people? Reflect on how you share or aspire to the same kinds of traits.
- Brainstorm some creative things you have accomplished that gave you a sense of satisfaction. This might be something artistic that you have crafted, performed or produced, an invention or product you have developed, or even articles that you have published.

- Name a time that you have volunteered to take on an especially challenging role or project. Describe it, and what you learned from it.
- If a friend, family member or co-worker were to brag about one of your skills, what would they say? Based on your own values, what would you want them to say?
- Create a list of memberships, special projects and teams in which you are active.
- Think of a unique challenge in your work or life roles that forced you to go outside of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). What did you do?
- Pretend that you are creating a dictionary in your career field's language. What are some specific terms, wording, jargon, or vocabulary you would include? Describe your knowledge of each term.
- Your family, boss, co-workers, and/or colleagues have depended on you for something. For example, they looked to you to fill a role or complete a specific kind of task. What is it?
- What do you understand or know so well that you often teach it to others? Look to all of the experiences in your life, not only those for which you have received monetary reward.
- If you had one piece of advice to give an aspiring person in your field, job, or role, what would it be? Name some specific examples of when you have mentored an individual in the past.
- Assume you are teaching a new employee, group member or associate on a job or role that you do well. What would you teach them that cannot be found in the job book or SOP manual?

In the end, combining your skills with your core values is the key to career success! When you understand what you bring to the negotiating table, you can often expand your professional options. The bottom line is that when you take the time for self-assessment, you are more likely to set realistic objectives and establish an effective career plan to reach your goals.

Team Boston's Shining Stars!

Military Member of the Year FY 2005 HM2 Lincoln!

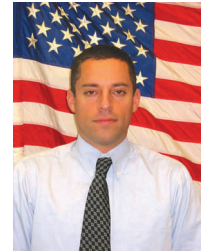
HM2 Jeremy Lincoln first came to us on October 8, 2004. He last worked at the Naval Medical Center in Portsmouth, Virginia. His most enjoyable vacation to date was going to Florida. His hobbies include reading, exercising, and listening to music.



HM2 Lincoln

Civilian Member of the Year FY2005 Mr. Rufo!

Mr. Rufo first came to us on December 23, 2002. He worked for the United States Internal Revenue Service before coming to work at the Boston MEPS as the Assistant Budget Analyst. However, he has recently left us to work for the United States Postal Service. His most enjoyable vacation to date was when he went to Bermuda in 2004. He enjoyed working outdoors and spending time with his family.



Mr. Rufo

Civilian Corner: Civilian Budget Information

The following websites are a must for civilians to access:

WWW.MYPAY.DFAS.MIL- This website allows you to access the following:

Pay Changes:

Leave and Earnings Statement (hardcopy LES's are being eliminated); Allotments; Correspondence Address; Direct Deposit; Savings Bonds Taxes:

Federal Withholdings; State Withholdings W-2 (can pull your 2005 W-2 instead of waiting for hardcopy W-2)

WWW.CIVILIANBENEFITS.HROC.NAVY.MIL -This website under the section EBIS allows

you to view the following and make changes to your benefits such as: Health Insurance (during open season); Thrift Savings; Retirement Calculator; Life Insurance (what your coverage is)

CREDIT CARD HOLDERS BEWARE- Credit card companies are preparing to double or triple the minimum payment due on their statements. This will probably only go into affect on someone's credit card if you miss a payment or fail to meet the original standards of your agreement with the company. So please be careful to maintain your good credit standing with the credit card company.

Military Corner: Military Personnel Records Available Online

You may now request copies of military personnel records, including proof of service (DD Form 214), through the National Personnel Records Center's (eVetRecs) system on the Internet via <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs/index.html>.

Military veterans or the next of kin of deceased, former military members are eligible to use this system. Next of kin include a surviving spouse who has not remarried, father, mother, son, daughter, sister or brother. All others must complete Form 180, which is available for

download at <http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/standard-form-180.html>.

Designed to improve service requests by eliminating mail-processing time, this Web-based system is user-friendly with prompts for easy navigation of the four-step system. Once the customized request is complete, users are required to print, sign and date the signature verification portion of their form and mail or fax it to the records center. Failure to submit a signature verification form within 20 days of entering a request will result in the removal of that request from the system.